

THE TRANSPORTATION LINK



Vol. 6 No. 6

June 1999



Luz Araoz Hopewell
Director of the
Office of Small and
Disadvantaged
Business Utilization

This is the time of year when we ask you — our valued OSDBU customers — to provide feedback on our service for last year, by filling out a short questionnaire located inside these pages.

This is *our* report card! And like a report card, the information you supply tells us in what areas we are doing well and where we might need improvement.

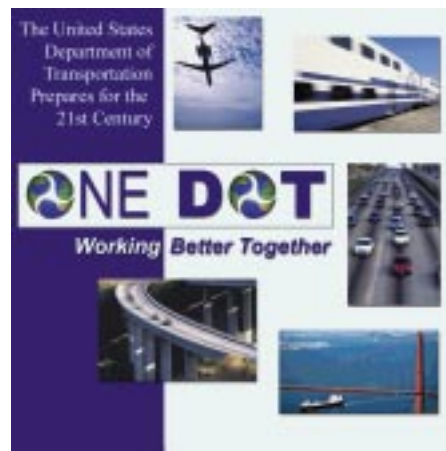
We take this feedback very seriously. It is used to help us plan how we will direct our resources and our efforts in the upcoming year. So please, take the time to share your thoughts with us.

The Department of Commerce offers a free *Y2K Jumpstart Kit* to help you prepare for potential Year 2000 computer problems. I want to be sure that all of the small businesses that work with the Department of Transportation are Y2K OK.

The Transportation Research Board (TRB) has issued a *Call for Papers* pertaining to Women's Issues in Transportation. These papers will make a significant contribution to the transportation community when they are presented at the next TRB annual meeting.

I have had the pleasure of meeting representatives from many small and disadvantaged businesses across the country at conferences this spring. It is a pleasure working with you and I pledge that we will strive to provide you with quality customer service.

At OSDBU — Outstanding Service is *Our* Business



OSDBU's focus on customer service reflects President Clinton's and Secretary Slater's strategic vision for the Dept. of Transportation

The Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) is committed to our core mission: assisting The Department of Transportation's (DOT) small business customers to compete for — and secure — contracting opportunities within DOT.

Our goal to help achieve this end is to provide the highest level of customer service available to small businesses anywhere in the federal government.

OSDBU's focus on customer service reflects the vision President Clinton and Secretary Slater set forth in the *Values Statement* of DOT's *Strategic Plan*. There, Secretary Slater pledges that the Department will strive to, "*Listen [to], learn from, and collaborate with our customers on how best to address their needs.*"

To aid in achieving the ambitious goals of DOT's *Strategic Plan*, Secretary Slater has enacted a management strategy widely known as ONE DOT. This initiative seeks to integrate the operating administrations within DOT to work together to achieve the Department's goals...including those pertaining to customer service.

At OSDBU, we take that commitment very seriously. We use a variety of means to respond to our customers needs.

National Information Clearinghouse (NIC)

The easiest way to contact OSDBU is by calling the *National Information Clearinghouse (NIC)* toll-free at (800) 532-1169. There, customer service representatives are available to answer questions, mail out pertinent documents, or refer you to specialists who can help you further. We estimate that our customer service staff has fielded nearly 10 thousand inquiries from clients contacting the NIC.

Continued on next page

OSDBU

Office of Small
and Disadvantaged
Business Utilization

wants to hear from you!! Call us toll-free at 1 800 532-1169 with questions or comments about this newsletter or our web site. The Transportation Link's content may be reprinted without permission.

Continued from last page



Dept. of Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater discusses transportation safety issues with a live television audience

We are proud of the level of service provided to our customers through the NIC. During normal business hours, 9-to-5 Eastern Standard Time (EST), professional customer service representatives are provided to answer all of your questions quickly and politely.

At all other times, clients calling this number may leave a voice message that will be responded to by the next business day. Requested materials are mailed out within three business days.

For specific requests that require the assistance of other OSDBU staff, the NIC customer service representative will transfer calls accordingly.

OSDBU Business Specialists

OSDBU Business Specialists provide counseling on a variety of procurement issues including how to market DOT for contracting opportunities; the basic procedures of the procurement process and Government contracting; small purchase procedure; and providing the appropriate points of contact at the Federal, state or local levels.

"Listen [to], learn from, and collaborate with our customers on how best to address their needs." —Secretary Slater

Moreover, Business Specialists address inquiries on the Bonding Assistance Program, Short Term Lending Program, dispute resolution and related topics. Whatever the question, OSD-BU's Business Specialists are committed to responding to inquiries with courteous and prompt service within one business day.

OSDBU Web Site

The most comprehensive and timely way OSDBU provides information to its customers is electronically. The increasing use of electronic media is revolutionizing the way the federal government does business with its contractors.

The DOT-OSDBU web site (<http://osdbuweb.dot.gov>) contains transportation-related information on programs, contract opportunities, outreach activities and related web sites - all updated daily.

Web site visitors subscribe to our automatic e-mail service, learn about the OSDBU programs, download documents, register in the contractor database, read the latest copy of *The Transportation Link* newsletter, and hyperlink to other electronic sources of information that are of interest to the OSDBU community.

While our primary information pieces; the *Marketing Package*, *Contracting With DOT* and the *DOT Procurement Forecast* are updated in print on a quarterly basis - we are able to update the same information on a daily basis on our web site.

Fax On-Demand

The NIC toll-free number referenced above also connects you to our Fax On-Demand service.

There are nearly 60 documents in the Fax On-Demand system ranging from information on the new Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) rule, the bonding and short-term lending programs, Y2K and marketing contacts.

Fax On-Demand contains DOT Procurement Forecast information grouped by requirement or region and includes the latest edition of *The Transportation Link*.

This system will fax information you request directly to the fax machine you specify 24-hours a day. This service is especially popular with businesses that employ a fax machine, but may not have OSDBU Internet access.

Feedback

To continue to improve customer service at OSDBU, we welcome your feedback!

We have included a customer service questionnaire designed to assist us in providing the very best service to you, our valued customer. Please take the time to fill out and return this form by fax or mail.

For your convenience we have also posted this questionnaire on our web site for those of you who would prefer to fill it out and submit it electronically.

For more information: please visit the DOT-OSDBU web site at osdbuweb.dot.gov. Call the NIC Customer Service Representatives or Fax On-Demand system at 800-532-1169, or fax us at 202-366-7538.

Comments may be sent by e-mail on the OSDBU web site at <http://osdbuweb.dot.gov/feedback.htm>



FedConsulting Succeeds On Service

June's Success Story features President & CEO Sharon Virts-Mozer and her company Federal Consulting Services, Inc. of Vienna, VA.



**President & CEO
Sharon Virts-Mozer**

Virts-Mozer is the 1998 Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week award recipient of the Transportation Administrative Service Center (TASC) for her work on past performance reviews and customer service surveys of prospective agency

vendors.

TASC wanted proven performers to serve their customers and hired Federal Consulting, Inc. to find them.

Virts-Mozer began FedConsulting in 1991 as a business development and marketing services consulting firm not long after starting up a successful government services division for a large publishing house.

"If I could do it for them, I could do it for myself," says Virts-Mozer.

Today FedConsulting's four primary service offerings are:

- Business Development Consulting
- Sales and Training
- Market Research; and
- Past Performance analysis.

FedConsulting's experience as a marketing company is looking for ways to better sell their client's goods and services to the Federal Government, therefore attention is paid to the client's past performance history.

"We really focus on our client's customer service history," says Virts-Mozer.

"Did they keep their clients happy? Did they do what it takes to win re-

peat business."

Virts-Mozer's fledgling company grossed \$185 thousand in their first year generated solely by Virts-Mozer's consultative fees. She began the company in her brother's basement as a single mom with two children still in diapers.

Today FedConsulting grosses nearly \$3 million annually and employs 28 full-time employees with a "stable" of expert consultants on-call.

"We don't believe you can measure value just by meeting the customer's requirement. The way we measure value is how you exceed those requirements."

They occupy a unique market niche as experts on past performance with a proven track record of marketing qualified vendors to federal agencies. In effect, FedConsulting bridges the gap between industry and the federal procurement process. And they know good customer service when they see it.

So what has been Virts-Mozer's key to winning awards and growing her business exponentially?

"Doing what I say I'm going to do when I say I'm going to do it," says Virts-Mozer reflexively.

"We don't believe you can measure value just by meeting the customer's requirement. The way we measure value

is how you exceed those requirements"

Virts-Mozer—a 13th generation Loudon County, VA native—counts 90 percent of FedConsulting's business as customer referrals or repeat business from delighted customers. Obviously she practices what she preaches to clients.

For the future Virts-Mozer does not look for FedConsulting to become a huge corporate entity.

"I don't want to grow so fast that I sacrifice quality customer service and premium customer satisfaction," explains Virts-Mozer.

In addition to providing DOT with past performance data and acquisition support, FedConsulting provides marketing plan guidance as DOT moves to sell its services to other government agencies.

For the future, Virts-Mozer's 8-year old company plans to be involved in marketing modernization and re-engineering programs for Federal mission-critical systems ... and exceeding minimum client requirements.

"There's nothing wrong with being a great small business!"



For more information, contact Federal Consulting Services, Inc. by phone at (703) 827-7080 or by fax at (703) 827-7085.

Visit their web site at: <http://www.fedconsulting.com/index.html>

A list of appropriate e-mail addresses can be located at <http://www.fedconsulting.com/personnel.html>



Call For Papers on Women's Transportation Issues

The Transportation Research Board (TRB) Task Force *On Women's Issues in Transportation* is issuing a *Call for Papers* to be selected for presentation at TRB's 2000 Annual Conference.

Given women's changing cultural roles, and increasing use of all transportation modes, the TRB has determined the necessity to study gender differences in vehicle safety, travel patterns and behavior.

The mission of the TRB Task Force *On Women's Issues in Transportation* is :

- Identify emerging women's issues in the use of transportation;
- Encourage research and information sharing on matters relating to women's travel behavior, transportation needs and utilization;
- Identify women's, safety and security issues relating to transportation; and

- Promote women decision-makers in the transportation industry.

The TRB asks that the papers address the following areas:

- Motor vehicle safety, to include trends in motor vehicle crashes, vehicle design issues, and differential propensity for injury particularly as women age.
- Vehicle design issues, including differential propensity for injury
- Women's security issues in transportation
- Trends and differences between men's and women's travel patterns
- Access to transportation facilities and services; and
- Career patterns and development of women's careers in transportation.

The deadline date is August 1, 1999.

For more information contact Susan Ferguson, Ph.D., of the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, by phone at 703-247-1580 or by e-mail at sferguson@iihs.org



Help Us Help You



NIC Customer Service Representative — Tawanna Martin — puts 4 years of OSDBU experience to work for small business customers

The Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) would like to know how well we are serving our valued customers. The information you provide will be used to evaluate and improve customer service.

Please fax this questionnaire back to: (703) 848-0804 (Attn: DOT-NIC Staff) or mail to DOT-OSDBU c/o BTL, 1749 Old Meadow Road, Suite 500, McLean, VA 22102.

By taking the time to provide feedback on our service, you will significantly improve our ability to serve your business and help expand economic opportunities for other small and disadvantaged business owners across the country.

Please take a minute and provide some feedback on what we do well and in what areas we need to improve.

The OSDBU staff members are dedicated professionals who aim to help expand your business opportunities. Please help us help you. Thank you.

New Y2K Kit Now Available

A new kit to help small businesses with the year 2000 computer problem is now available as a free, downloadable file from the Commerce Department web site at: y2khelp.nist.gov

The primary component of the *Y2K Jumpstart Kit* is software known as *Conversion 2000:Y2K Self Help Tool*. This new tool was developed by the Manufacturing Extension Partnership, a Commerce Department's National Institute of Standards and Technology program. The software is now available in both Microsoft Access and Excel formats.

Although the kit is not a Y2K cure-all, it can help small businesses:

- Inventory equipment, including hardware, software and embedded systems
- Identify core business systems and rate their importance
- Develop contingencies; and
- Plan and manage remediation projects.

In addition, the Y2K Jumpstart Kit includes a quick start guide, a detailed user's guide for the software, and a self-assessment checklist to assist your business to determine whether its suppliers' computer systems and equipment may have Y2K problems.

The Y2K Jumpstart Kit can be downloaded at: y2khelp.nist.gov/ It is also available from MEP centers at 800-MEP-4MFG, Small Business Administration offices, or U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperative Extension offices. The Commerce Department's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) provides technical support to users of this kit at 800-Y2K-7557 or at y2khelp@nist.gov



Fax to: (703) 848-0804

DBE Update

Recent analysis of the OSDBU web site has shown that some of our most heavily visited pages are in the section on the new Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Rule (49 CFR Part 26) at <http://osdbuweb.dot.gov/programs/dbe/dbe.htm>

As part of our continuing effort to bring OSDBU customers critical information that affects their business procurement practice, we have assembled all of DOT's official DBE information in one central location to better serve you.

For example, *What's New in the New DOT DBE Rule* summarizes the major changes from the old rule with special emphasis placed on:

- Setting and Meeting DBE Goals
- Certification and Eligibility; and
- Program Administration.

For more information on the DOT/DBE Final Rule, visit the OSDBU web site at <http://osdbuweb.dot.gov/programs/dbe/dbe.htm> or call Bob Ashby at (202) 366-9306.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR June / July 1999

| Date | Place | Contact |
|------------|--|--|
| June 8-11 | 32nd Annual Joint Industry SBA Procurement Conference Awards/Trade Fair Washington, DC | Register at: http://www.sba.gov/gc/expo.htm or call: (877) 722-3263 |
| June 15-16 | 3rd Annual Native American Lifesavers Conference Bismark, ND | Dennis Renville (701) 255-3285 nddrenville2@hotmail.com |
| June 17-20 | National Black Chamber of Commerce National Convention Riverside Hilton Hotel New Orleans, LA | Yvonne DeBow (202) 466-6888 E-mail at www.nationalbcc.org |
| June 23 | Sixth Annual Procurement Trade Expo New Britain, CT Sponsored by PTAC | Betty Butler (860) 223-8412 |
| June 24 | 2nd Annual Minority/Women-Owned Business Exhibition and Trade Opportunity Fair '99 Washington, DC | Debra A. Williams (703) 370-0706 |
| July 15 | DOT/OSDBU Transportation Marketplace Portland, OR | Susan Bowser (800) 532-1169 Register at: http://osdbuweb.dot.gov/main.cfm |

<http://osdbuweb.dot.gov>

US Department of Transportation
Office of the Secretary of Transportation
Base Technologies, Inc.
1749 Old Meadow Road
Suite 500
McLean, VA 22102
Address Correction Requested